

## The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform

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The book's title is somewhat misleading, as the focus of the study is the pork packing industry rather than the meat packing industry as a whole. Also, Walsh, while tracing the peculiarities of the meat packing industry, might have outlined how developments in this one field paralleled developments in industrial enterprises in general, in such features as efficiencies of size, concentration in urban and transportation centers, new technology, assembly-line production, and so on.

The book has ninety-two pages of text divided into six chapters, the last of which summarizes what has been said before. An appendix, the copious and detailed notes, and a selected bibliography add nearly as many more pages. Walsh's research has been exhaustive. Twenty-four tables illustrate and validate the author's conclusions. Careful use of biographical material strengthens and enlivens the text. It is unlikely anyone else will replicate Walsh's endeavors or improve upon her general conclusions in the foreseeable future. The book will not attract the casual reader but it is a fine example of scholarship and will be of inestimable value to regional and economic historians.

KEARNEY STATE COLLEGE

GENE E. HAMAKER

*The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, by Lawrence C. Kelly. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983. xxix, 377 pp. Photographs, appendix, notes, note on sources, index. \$23.50 cloth.

John Collier is best known as the prime mover of the so-called Indian New Deal. In that role he is much acclaimed and much abused, both deservedly. Those who are critical of Collier argue that he shared the tragic flaw possessed by many "do-gooders." He cared so much about Indians that he convinced himself that he understood Indian values and goals, sometimes better than they understood these things themselves. Critics point out also that Collier's interest in and expertise with regard to Indians resulted from only a two-year stint in New Mexico where he "discovered" the Pueblos. His sincerity is never questioned, however.

Lawrence C. Kelly, professor of history at North Texas State University and prolific writer on the Indian in the twentieth century, is more positive than critical with regard to Collier and his efforts. He confines volume I of his projected two-volume biography to Collier's pre-Great Depression years; more than two-thirds of his study deals with the years from 1922 to 1927. It was in these years

that Collier, as executive-secretary of the American Indian Defense Association, emerged as the twentieth century's most prominent and probably most effective white spokesperson for Indian rights.

Collier's life is rendered as colorful as it was important by the range of interesting personalities with whom he was intimate—Mabel Dodge, Lincoln Steffens, John Reed, Walter Lippmann, Bill Haywood, Isadora Duncan, and John Dewey, among others. Kelly uses this supporting cast to keep his study lively and fascinating. Better than most of his friends and acquaintances, Collier succeeded in straddling the progressive-radical fence and hence did not alienate most of the liberal and wealthy individuals whose support and influence he needed to achieve his goals. His ability to attract funding for his various pro-Indian activities constitutes one of the more intriguing aspects of the story.

Kelly makes excellent use of personal papers, interviews, government documents, and the records of various pro-Indian organizations to provide insights valuable to those interested in Native Americans, modern race relations, and progressivism. Kelly's second volume will undoubtedly focus on Collier's years as commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and his efforts at Indian reform. Its arrival is eagerly awaited.

MARYCREST COLLEGE

STEPHEN D. BODAYLA

*American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives*, by Gretchen M. Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984. 209 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$18.95 cloth.

That the life stories of American Indian women deserve to be included in the literary genre of autobiography is the central thesis of this well-argued book. From their perspective as specialists in American Indian literature, the authors make a strong case for Native American women's personal reminiscences as literature.

The opening sections of the study place Indian women's personal writings in the category of autobiography by relating them to similar works, such as captivity narratives written by white women and men as well as life tales recorded by black slaves. In addition, the initial chapters discuss the collecting and recording of Indian women's stories and analyze in detail the various revelations found in them.

The bulk of the volume is devoted to a detailed examination of specific Native American women's autobiographies. These include the chronicles of Mountain Wolf Woman, a Wisconsin Winnebago;

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